



A Happy New Year

Such is our wish and prayer for all our readers. In that wish, there is, we hope, nothing thoughtless or insincere, nothing said to gain advantage or to be a slave to custom. It is our heartfelt prayer to God that every reader of this journal may spend the year to its very end in the service of God. That is the right attitude to life. We all have useful work to do. Let us determine to do that work well. A long time ago, a teacher said to me: "Never lose your

love of good work." Whether I have proved faithful or not to that admonition, I know it is right. Let us specialize in work well done. Let us do our work from pure, unselfish motives. Let us endeavor to do our work so as to convey as much benefit, kindness and helpfulness to the others as possible. May the spirit and example of Jesus be our teacher in all our work. That will establish our right attitude to life, and true happiness will be the result.



A Message from the Business Manager

By GISSUR ELIASSON

The whole world has been busily engaged these past few days in its annual custom of stocktaking. It is a good practice wherever conscientiously pursued, for everyone should be anxious to determine what progress has been made during the past year. Where no progress, or very little, can be shown, it is well to adopt new resolutions, and new changes, to insure as far as possible that such failings will not again occur. The threshold of the New Year seems to be an appropriate time for most people to take inventory of themselves and the affairs appertaining to them, for during this transitional period it is natural to want to review the past year and to look forward with hope to the opportunities offered by the year that has just dawned. May it be a good year for us all, so that when its course has been run we can count our blessings gratefully and find that their sum total far outweighs any failings that may crop up in our next year's stock-taking. This is our sincere wish for our readers and friends.

The publishing board of the Parish Messenger has been taking stock of its affairs and are pleased to announce that in most respects

satisfactory progress has been and is being made. There are always new readers being added to its circulation and always encouraging and friendly comments being received about the paper itself. From the increased number of able contributors it is evident that a more general co-operation is being attained in the submitting of material. This in itself, though there are still some congregations too seldom heard from, points the way to the fulfilment of the original purpose of this publication, which is to link together all congregations within our synod, by making known to each the activities and progressive interests of the other. These facts together present a picture of real progress, and of definite strides forward.

Unfortunately the financial aspect of our publication has not been able to match strides with equal sureness, and the time has come when some effective measure needs must be found to make the Parish Messenger self-supporting, or nearly so. It has been known for some time by the Publishing Board that the present rate of 50c yearly was inadequate to meet operating expenses, for it costs no less than

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Our Parish Messenger

English Language Organ of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod.

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LUNDAR AND LANGRUTH

I have written glowing accounts of Lundar before, much less about Langruth, although I have been there much more often. This time my story will be very brief. Sunday before Christmas was given to Langruth. Such was their own wish. We had a Christmas service, mostly Icelandic, followed by a social gathering, and after that the Christmas concert of the Sunday School. Mrs. B. Bjarnarson and Mrs. L. Thorleifson have been most actively connected with the Sunday School. The former is now the superintendent. There was a splendid program, the performers being the members of the Sunday School.

Lundar, also by its own choice had Sunday, Dec. 28th. We just had a Christmas service. The Sunday School had already had their Christmas concert on Christmas Eve, and had a very good program. The superintendent of their Sunday School is Miss Pauline Johnson, a teacher in the town school.

All these leaders have done excellent work in the Sunday school, and the people, I think are grateful to them.

I only wish the whole district might have a permanent pastor of the right spirit, energy and wisdom.

OUR YOUNGEST GENERATION

That is the Icelandic Lutheran Congregation in Vancouver, B.C. It was not born with a silver spoon in its mouth; it is not a child of luxury, but rather one that was reared in poverty, surrounded by difficulties, but such stock sometimes acquires manly vigor and wholesome development. That is just what we are hoping for this congregation. One of the difficulties of this infant was the scattering of the Icelandic people to the farthest corners of the great city and its suburbs. Not many men of wealth were found among them. This same community has reared another beautiful youngster, the Old

Folks' Home, in a princely abode. The demands on this community have been considerable. The congregation is still without a church of its own; but, in spite of all hardships, there are signs of a beautiful spirit and growing vigor. From the "Notes" in this issue you see that this young congregation conducts an "Every Member" canvass and uses the duplicate envelopes. The first one of these shows that the work of the congregation is conducted in a systematic, energetic way, and why should not the work of the extension of the Kingdom of God be conducted in that way? The other shows that the congregation has a wider christian view than just its own narrow boundaries and needs. I pray that all our congregations may have the same broad conception of their christian duties.

This phase of the work of the congregation is well explained in the fine report of the president, Mr. L. Thorlaksson, at the last annual meeting. We quote the paragraph:

"During the year, we were successful in inaugurating the more general use of envelopes in meeting our financial obligations. On Oct. 26th of this year (1947), the members of the congregation conducted an every member canvass. The results were most encouraging and the pledges to date total approximately \$1,600.00 or 50 per cent in excess of pledges and donations this past year. There is also satisfaction in the pledges to Benevolence (the red side of the envelope) which will enable us to reach our quota to the apportionment fund of the U.L.C.A. as against previously making token remittances from our general receipts."

We would suggest that every congregation in our synod read every word in this paragraph, and do some thinking about the matter.

A MESSAGE FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER

(Continued from Page 1)

52c to print and mail each copy yearly. This rate was approved, even though presenting a temporary deficit, as an introductory offer with the recommendation that it be raised when necessity demanded it. Necessity (a hard mistress) has spoken in no uncertain terms and unless the subscription rate is increased to 75c per year and unless outstanding dues are reduced substantially by early remittances the deficit will grow to the extent where it will be difficult indeed to manage. Actually, even though the new rate is 75c yearly, there has been no increase, for the former rate of 50c was only an introductory special which through necessity must now be withdrawn.

Greetings from the Editor

(Continued from Last Month)

We, in the West, have been led to believe that interest in religious things in Iceland was at a low ebb, that the church life was characterized by formalism, that people did not attend church, etc. I have not seen any marked evidence of this. At least in this parish, people attend church quite well. Of course there are many who never attend church, like anywhere else. The Icelandic clergy consists as a whole of very well educated and cultured men, who would adorn their profession in any country. Many of them that I have come to know, are intensely interested in their work, and progressive in their methods. The public holds them in high esteem, even to the extent of encouraging vanity and promoting a sense of false importance among them.

They insist e.g. on addressing me as pastor in the plural, saying "ther-ydur". I do not personally cherish this mode of address, and frequently tell these people that I am just one person, and one of them. But no, as parson I am supposed to be above and apart from the common man, hence entitled to this designation of courtesy. However, this is gradually fading out I believe, especially among the younger generation. They often get mixed up in their pronouns, as when they say: "Viltu gera svo vel ad gefa mer vottord?—Verid ther saelir."

Of course this formal mode of address is not used for clergymen only or by them. It is a custom in general use when speaking to

strangers, older persons, or officials of any kind. It serves an excellent purpose if you want to keep someone at a distance. When I hear it used, it seems to me to say: To me you are a stranger, I am not sure that I want to know you. Don't come too near me! But to my westernized mode of thinking it is out of place between a pastor and his people.

I have had an opportunity to attend some important church functions and see the Church of Iceland in action. I have attended a couple of regional conferences and the Centennial Celebration of the Seminary, or theological department of the University, and also a nation-wide conference of laymen and pastors. Judging from these contacts I think I am safe in saying that there is a definite forward movement in the church, especially as regards Sunday schools, and work among the young people. Several parishes have had movie equipment installed and use religious films from America, and other countries in their instruction of the young. It is quite obvious that there are sharp differences of opinion among the clergy on theological matters, but all work together more or less harmoniously under the same roof under the able and energetic leadership of the Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Sigurgeir Sigurdsson. One venerable dean (profastur) told me recently: "Our young pastors come into the ministry often with very liberal ideas in theology, but these wear off under the strain of the ministry. They simply



Rev. V. J. Eylands, Mrs. Eylands and family, visiting near the place where the old parliament of Iceland met for hundreds of years.

do not work, and people as a whole do not want them."

Since coming here, I have heard a number of ministers preach, both in churches and on the radio. I am unable to discern any difference in their proclamation from that to which we in our Synod are accustomed. The preaching is evangelical and Christocentric, Christ the hope of the world, and the Savior of men, or else what could the church proclaim?

* * *

This is getting to be a long epistle, so I shall have to close, if this is to appear in the columns of The Parish Messenger. There is much else I could say, but I shall have to write more later. I believe our readers will be interested in these news items, as people here are interested in hearing about us who reside in Canada or the U.S.A. I am called upon to speak quite often at various functions, and almost invariably the people want to hear about the Icelanders in America, and their descendants. For me it is a pleasure to speak on this subject, and thus do my bit while I am here to convey information and be a messenger of good will between our people on both sides of the Atlantic.

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A GRAND WOMAN

Very brief reference was made, in our December issue to the passing of Mrs. Erika Thorlaksson, in Seattle, Wash., Nov. 6th, at the ripe age of 89 years. She was the widow of Rev. N. S. Thorlaksson, who died in 1943. A memorial service was held in Seattle, Nov. 8th. The funeral was held in Selkirk, Man., Nov. 11th, conducted by Rev. S. Olafsson, pastor of the church which Rev. Thorlaksson served last, assisted by pastors Fafnis, Brynjolfsson and Sigmar.

The last earthly remains of both Rev. and Mrs. Thorlaksson rest in Selkirk. In Selkirk they both worked faithfully and efficiently as co-workers with God for 27 years and there they brought up their outstanding family of four sons and two daughters.

Mrs. Thorlaksson's native home was Norway, and Norway she loved devotedly to the end of her days. When Rev. Thorlaksson was a theological student at the University of Norway, he met this lady, then Erika Rynning. Their acquaintance developed into love. When he had completed his course at the University, he accepted a call from Icelandic congregations in and around Minneota, Minnesota, in 1887. Miss Rynning came over a year later, and they were married in Minneapolis in 1888. From that time on, she gave her life and her love to

the Icelandic people, yet not forgetting Norway.

In the memorial volume dedicated to the memory of Rev. Thorlaksson, there is an article by the distinguished writer, Gunnar B. Bjornsson, about Mr. Thorlaksson's work in Minneota. I quote one paragraph, a pen picture of Mrs. Thorlaksson. It is just like a photograph; it follows:

"Mrs. Thorlaksson came to the Minneota parish as a ray of sunshine. Everybody fell in love with her at first sight. She had quality, culture, geniality, beauty, charm, and music. It was some change for this city-bred woman to come to a pioneer, prairie hamlet of but several hundred inhabitants where the only "modern convenience" consisted of the privilege of getting along without any. She was accustomed to cultured society, to the gay life of a European metropolis, to comparative ease and comfort as a daughter of one of Norway's old and honored families. Yet, cooped up in two dingy rooms over a dilapidated store, she never grumbled, she never complained. One can not explain it except on the theory that heroes and poets are born, not made. The writer of this yields to no man when it comes to admiration for Rev. N. S. Thorlaksson, but it would be unfair not to accord to Mrs. Thorlaksson an equal share in the credit for all the good work which was done by this worthy couple during the seven years that they tarried on this Minnesota frontier.

Later they served in Park River, N.D., and finally in Selkirk, 1900-1927, after which Rev. Thorlaksson retired.

In the memorial volume already referred to, there is a fine article, about Rev. Thorlaksson's pastoral work in Selkirk, by Mr. J. G. Johannsson, a high school teacher of long standing in Winnipeg. Among other things in that article, there is a graphic description of what Mr. Thorlaksson, with the invaluable assistance of his wife, did for the young people. "In that work," the writer says, "Mr. Thorlaksson scored a great success. There was possibly no part of his ministry which, in his later years, he could regard with greater satisfaction or from which he realized richer returns than his work with the younger people of the parish. Many of the meetings were held at the manse. One recalls the large attendance, and enthusiasm at these meetings; one wondered that so many could be accommodated in the house, and how Mrs. Thorlaksson, with all her other duties, could find time to prepare refreshments for the guests. She was, no less than her husband, anxious for the welfare of the congregation; her efforts to ensure success were no less unsparing. Everyone, whether friend or stranger,

received a heart-warming welcome in the home." Their home radiated benign influence over the whole community.

During the last months of Mrs. Thorlaksson's life, her youngest daughter, Mrs. Erika Eastvold, was on a visit in Norway. She was able to get back to Seattle in time to give her mother, before she died, an account of things she saw and heard in Norway. What a heaven upon earth that was to this splendid woman.

Now follows a tribute from her grandson:

A TRIBUTE TO MY GRANDMOTHER. MRS. N. S. THORLAKSSON

By REV. HARALD S. SIGMAR

As I think about my Grandmother's personality on this farewell day, three words keep repeating in my mind: music, sentiment, romance. And these qualities of hers, which were always dear to her loved ones, were of the finest as they were expressed in her life.

Music was not only an expression of her talent but of her very being. The hymns of her mother, the songs of her sisters, the music of her husband and children were all at the heart of her days. But now I cannot help but think of her own music, the harmony of her spirit and the thrilling song from her lips. Even at the great age in which I knew her, her voice was beautiful. Last summer it was my privilege to witness a sacred moment. Her youngest sister from Norway was visiting her. We sat in her daughter's living-room. Bestemor's life was mostly within her memories then. In the quiet that hushed the room, I began to play softly on the piano. During one of the songs, Besti picked up the strain and began to sing. When I came to the second verse she sang clearly:

"Kjaerlighed fra Gud, springer lige ud som en kilde, klar og ren. Blev i kjaerlighed og du har Guds fred, ti Gud selv er kjaerlighed." Her sister had arisen and was standing with folded hands, looking deep into the blind eyes of my grandmother, her own filled with glistening tears.

Out of her singing heart flowed always a loving sentiment, pure and sweet. She loved all God's children and showed it in hospitality and good will to all. But there was a special, warm sentiment in the way she would look at me and pat my hand and say, "Min eldste barnebarn." And that bright affection, she showered on all her children. For them I want to repeat a little verse that we all spoke to her, and that gladdened her heart, especially in latter days:

"Min kjaere, sode Beste, jeg elsker dig saa underlig,

Og at det kan gaa over, det tru jeg ikke nu,
Nei! forst flyr storken fra sine smaa
For hjerte mit fra min Bestemor skall gaa
Paa jorden og i himelen, der vill jeg elske
Bestemor min."

From a heart singing with rich sentiment, a romance of life was lived. There is an incident from her childhood that has always appealed to me as an illustration of her adventurous, romantic spirit. It seems to epitomize her characteristic of believing that anything is possible, and her determined way of overcoming obstacles. She was the eldest daughter in a large family, and felt strong responsibility for the younger children. One night when her parents supposed that all the family was asleep, they were discussing financial difficulties. Her father had a position in the royal court, but was underpaid. An immediate solution came to the little girl who overheard. "I will see the king about it," she thought, and in confidence fell asleep. Early next morning she was hurrying down the streets of Norway's Capitol toward the Palace Gates. I can see this little girl now, struggling up those marble steps, with eager, shining eyes undimmed by any thought that she might be refused. Nor was she disappointed.

Now she has been set from all earthly fetters free. In fancy, I can see her—her romantic spirit restored to the fullest, eyes that have known the deepest of earthly joys and sentiment, now shining with the fulfillment of Divine Love, her heart of music, once endowed to life's worship and joy, now bursting with a song of praise, running eagerly to the Palace Gates and up the shining steps of marble to see the King of Kings. And now by His grace she no longer lies in darkness and waiting upon an invalid's bed; she is a little girl again restored to her mother's arms; she is a young bride, coming with her beloved to a new, far-off land, investing even a dim apartment above a general store, with radiance; again she is a mother dear, pouring love into her children's hearts; again a beloved Bestemor, with smooth cheeks and unwrinkled brow, giving music and romance and beautiful sentiment, all girded by God's Love, to all of life.

Run the straight race,
Through God's good grace,
Lift up thine eyes
And seek His face.
Life with its way before us lies;
Christ is the path,
And Christ the prize.

CAMP NOTES

By MRS. INGIBJORG OLAFSSON

Report for the Summer of 1947

Given at a meeting of the Board of Directors of Sunrise Lutheran Camp, Aug. 25, 1947.

It gives me pleasure to report a successful season, now just drawn to a close, at our camp.

Activities opened June 22, with the dedication of the Memorial Hall, followed by the annual convention of the Lutheran Women's League. The dedication service was attended by capacity audience in spite of heavy rain. During the convention there were over 60 in residence. Evening and afternoon meetings were well attended by an interested audience. Our gracious hostesses during the convention were the Ladies' Aid Societies from Arborg, Vidir and Geysir.

The Sunday School Teachers' Rally was a success according to reports of all present. During that weekend (June 27-29) over 40 people were in residence.

The Seniors who took our leadership training courses consisted of young people 15-20 years of age from the Argyle district, Lundar, Selkirk, Riverton, Arborg, Winnipeg and Gimli. Instructors were Rev. E. H. Fafnis, Miss Eleanore Gillstrom, Rev. S. Olafsson and Rev. S. Sigurgeirson. Rev. Fafnis acted as dean of camp. Miss Gudrun Johannson was matron and nurse. Miss Jean Greuz was swimming instructor and recreational leader. Miss Margaret Olson and Miss Josephine Olafsson assisted as deans of girls.

A lovely group of 57 junior boys was the next group. Religious teaching was under the direction of Mrs. E. H. Fafnis. Miss G. A. Johannsson again acted as nurse and matron. Miss J. Greuz was again the leader for recreational work and swimming. Four young men were leaders: Baldwin Thorsteinson, Winnipeg; Victor Erickson, Selkirk; Wallace Bjarnarson, Langruth, and Donald Martin, Gimli.

Following the Junior Boys was the Ministers' Retreat. Seven ministers took advantage of it, three ministers' wives and the Fafnis family. Two days were spent in fellowship and meditation. Splendid papers were given by the ministers, followed by discussion. All present enjoyed heartily the good meals prepared by our cooks, enjoyed also taking turns at the different chores, not forgetting that all were campers anxious to do their share of the work.

The next week had been set aside as a mothers' camp. Few took advantage of it, but according to reports those that were there enjoyed themselves at the same time as they

had a marvellous rest. Mrs. Sigurgeirson was in charge during that period.

The last group consisted of 48 Junior Girls. During that period I was in charge. Mrs. W. Olson was camp nurse. Miss Eleanore Gillstrom was with us again in charge of the religious teaching. Miss Norma Robinson was the swimming instructor and recreational leader; Josephine Olafsson taught handwork; deans of girls were Miss Lilja Guttormson, Miss Sigurborg Oddleifson, Miss Shirley Ingaldson, Mrs. Sigurgeirson was in charge of the dining room for a part of that period.

During the season the following have given their time and services to the camp: Miss Gudrun, A. Johannson, three weeks; Mrs. S. O. Bjerring, Mrs. Sigurgeirsson, Josephine Olafsson, two weeks each; Mrs. Sophia Kristjanson, Sigurborg Oddleifson, Mrs. Olson, Victor Erickson, Donald Martin, ten days each; Lilja Guttormson and Margaret Olson, six days each; Wallace Bjarnarson, eight days.

Wages were paid to our head cook, Mrs. Lineker for the whole season; to Mrs. Oliver for one month; to the two swimming instructors and to Baldwin Thorsteinson. I should not use the word wages, as in every case the amount was smaller than it would have been if full wages had been paid.

During the season, a religious service was held every Sunday except one. On two occasions these were conducted by the young people under the leadership of Miss Gillstrom. One Sunday Rev. E. H. Fafnis had the service, and one Sunday the service was taken by two of the leaders, Baldwin Thorsteinson and Victor Erickson. Each group had its closing concert under the direction of the leaders. The closing night, Aug. 15, an excellent programme was given by the Junior Girls under the direction of their able leaders. That concert was attended by interested co-workers chiefly from Selkirk.

The following morning, Aug. 16, our last day in camp, some of us celebrated by rising at five o'clock in the morning. I had promised to go the rounds and wake up all the leaders which I did when I had lighted the fire in kitchen stove and put the kettle on. By the time they had watched the sunrise, got dressed, etc., a meagre breakfast was on the kitchen table, which was supposed to keep them till the usual breakfast hour. Then they all started off to the Husavick station to see Miss Gillstrom off, who was taking the early train that morning. All were quite elated at having succeeded in watching the sun rise at the Sunrise Camp.

On the whole, this season has been a success, with no accidents nor serious illness. But still

it is well to remember that we have a lot to learn and far to go, as we must aim at nothing less than making our camp a model camp in every way. Let us profit by our mistakes and try to avoid them in the future.

In closing I wish to thank all for splendid co-operation, all those that stayed in camp helping, and others who assisted in one way or another.

* * *

The Board of Directors, chosen at last convention, have taken over their duties in a very enthusiastic manner. Three meetings have already been held, two of which were held at the camp last summer, both being well attended, and one at the home of Mr. and Mrs. S. O. Bjerring, in Winnipeg, held last Fall. Mr. S. O. Bjerring was elected chairman of the board, also convenor of finance committee; Rev. E. H. Fafnis convenor of the educational committee; Dr. E. Johnson heads the physical fitness committee. This fall Dr. Johnson has sponsored two working bees at the camp. The second group consisted of 12 men from Selkirk and four from Gimli; supper was served to the group by Mrs. A. H. Gray of Winnipeg, Mrs. Sigurgeirson of Gimli and myself. The gentlemen put in an afternoon of hard work and enjoyed the supper (we hope) as much as we enjoyed preparing it. Later a group of people from Winnipeg went down to look after various things in closing up. According to reports, some good Brownies had been at work in the meantime attending to different things.

There is still much to be done before we open camp next year. All hands on deck and we'll do it!

By the way, Mrs. Anna Magnusson is the camp treasurer. Her address is Box 296, Selkirk, just in case you are not certain as to where to send your next donation.

CHRISTMAS IN THE FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH, WINNIPEG

By J. T. JONASSON

The Christmas season was ushered in by the English Christmas service at 11 a.m., Sunday, December 21. The Christmas decorations had been completed before that service. This year the church was decorated by volunteers from the Men's Club. As usual there was an exceptionally fine tree with an abundance of well-arranged lights. Other decorations of smaller trees and lights were in very good taste, although not quite so elaborate as on some previous occasions.

The Icelandic Christmas Service was held as usual at 11 a.m. on Christmas Day. This service is indispensable to those who have been brought up in this church, and whose traditions take them to their church on Christmas Day.

It has become a tradition that the Sunday schools sponsor two concerts during the Christmas season, one on Christmas Eve and the other on the Sunday between Christmas and New Year; this latter replaces the regular service at that time. The church is always filled to capacity for these occasions, and this year was no exception to the rule.

The first concert was given by the younger children of the Sunday school. All children under twelve took part and they were divided into groups of 25-30 children, and each group rendered songs or choral readings. The youngest group of performers were from 4 to 6 years old. It is very pleasing to see so large a group of such tiny performers appearing on this, the Children's Festival. Their enthusiasm for their task and the pleasure they derive from their performance is indeed inspiring. No attempt will be made to name those who trained or conducted the various groups, but the work reflected great credit on all who had given so generously of their time and talent to make the concert so enjoyable.

The Sunday evening concert was given by children twelve years and over. The main feature of this concert was a pageant, "The Vision". This is one of the most appropriate pageants we have seen. A large chorus of girls, under the direction of Mrs. I. W. Hart and Miss Corinne Day, provided a very appropriate background for the pageant. These pageants are made enjoyable and realistic by elaborate and appropriate costumes, and by artistic lighting. The costumes were under the direction of Mrs. G. J. Johnson and the lighting was directed by Mr. A. McNicholl and the superintendent of the Sunday school, Mr. G. Eliasson.

This concert was brought to an end by carol singing under the leadership of Mr. Paul Bardal. The soft tones of "Silent Night" brought to a close the Christmas festivities for another year.

—*—

Father of love, to thee we bow;

Do Thou in mercy keep

Our land, our home in peace as now

We lay us down to sleep.

—Arnor Jonsson, translated by Bishop Pilcher.

* * *

Dear contributors, roll your notes in for next issue, not later than Jan. 30th. Let them be brief and churchly.

NOTES from OUR PARISHES

NOTES FROM VANCOUVER

By ENGA O. SIGURDSON

To Mr. Byron (Bjossi) Johnson of New Westminster we offer congratulations and wish him success in greater service for B.C. On his birthday Dec. 10, he was elected leader of the Liberal party of this province, and all the Icelandic people here are elated over the honor bestowed upon him.

The spacious and comfortable living-room of the Old Folks' Home on Osler St., was the meeting place of the W.A. on Dec. 11, when each member donated a pretty cup and saucer for the Home. New officers elected were: President, Mrs. John Sigurdson; vice-president, Mrs. S. J. Sigmar; treasurer, Miss Helga Johnson; recording secretary, Mrs. S. Goodman; corresponding secretary, Mrs. N. C. Ogg.

Miss Margaret Sigmar was hostess to the Luther League at a well-attended meeting in mid December, at her home on French St.

During December all church services commenced at 2 p.m., which proved very popular, as Sunday School was held concurrently.

Mr. B. Thorlacius again decorated the huge Christmas tree for the Sunday School concert in a spectacular style, as he has done in former years and received much praise for his artistic skill. Fifty children and members of the Luther League staged a play on Dec. 21, interspersed with Christmas Carols. The Christchild was the "Theme of Joy," readers being Carol Lanigan, Lillian Johnson, Irene Finnbogason and Violet Sigurdson, while Johnny Goodman and Lawrence Finnbogason keynoted the message. Treats in the form of candy and oranges went to each child from the Luther League.

Mr. and Mrs. Oli Stefanson of Argyle, Man., with their three children, William, Allen and Eleanor, have come here to live and are staying with their son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Pentland.

The sudden death of Knox Mansell Hambly, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Hambly of New Westminster, came as a great shock to our whole congregation on Sunday, Dec. 21st. The young 27-year-old U. of B.C. student and R.C.A.F. veteran died in Shaughnessy Military Hospital from cerebral hemorrhage just a few hours after being stricken. Funeral services on Dec. 24, were conducted by our pastor, as were the burial services on Dec. 18 of Gudmundur Sigurdsson, aged 80, formerly of Winnipeg.

On Boxing Day, services were conducted by

our pastor in Icelandic and English followed by a "Coffee Party" in the Social Hall, given by the W.A. The musical program consisted of Christmas Carols sung by the choir, and vocal solos by Mrs. Verne Bjornson, and the five Axdal sisters. Mrs. Gunnar Gudmundson was the social convenor.

The annual meeting of the Icelandic Lutheran congregation in Vancouver was held on Wednesday, Dec. 3rd, at 8 p.m., in the Social Hall of the Danish Church. The attendance was the best yet.

Mr. L. H. Thorlaksson, president, conducted the meeting in his usual efficient manner. There were carefully prepared and interesting annual reports given by the president, treasurer, delegate to synod, pastor, president of the W.A., president of the Luther League, and president of the deacons. All these reports showed a healthy growth and progress in our congregation. The treasurer's report indicated a good year financially, and his report of the Every Member Canvass for 1948 showed a larger number of contributors, and larger contributions. It was particularly gratifying to note how many were contributing generously through the "red" side of their envelopes, to benevolence and the activities of the church at large.

The board of trustees and of deacons elected consist partly of old and partly of new members. The members of the board of trustees now are the following: H. M. Sumarladason, president; Stefan Solvason, secretary; B. Thorlacius, treasurer; L. H. Thorlaksson, vice-president; Herman Sigurdson, S. J. Sigmar, and Sigfus Gillies. The deacons are: Carl Finnbogason, president; Miss Rose Thorne, secretary-treasurer; Mrs. W. Mooney, Miss D. Erlendson, R.N., and Einar Haralds. Auditors, appointed by the chair, are C. T. Eyford and G. F. Gislason.

Healthy optimism was in evidence and a spirit of good fellowship. A social fellowship with lunch was enjoyed by all present, after the meeting.

An excellent picture of the activities of the congregation, during the past year, was given by the retiring president, Mr. L. H. Thorlaksson, in his report.



"Heavenly Father, help us to realize Thy infinite Love and Mercy because of which Thou hast promised us salvation through Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen."